

FOCUS

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The Quarterly Newsletter for Physician Office Staff

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Lehigh Valley Hospital Again Named Among Best in U.S. for Heart Care by U.S. News & World Report

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Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH) ranks as one of the nation's top hospitals for heart care and heart surgery in the 2003 **U.S. News & World Report** guide to "America's Best Hospitals." This is the eighth consecutive year that LVH has made the **U.S. News & World Report** rankings. In past years, the hospital earned distinction for cardiology/ cardiac surgery, urology, hormonal disorders, geriatrics and respiratory disorders.

LVH joined just five other hospitals in Pennsylvania on the list that included the Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

According to **U.S. News & World Report**, "America's Best Hospitals" assessed care in 17 specialties. In order to be considered, a hospital must meet one of three standards: membership in the Council of Teaching Hospitals, affiliation with a medical school or availability of specified items of medical technology. In each specialty, a hospital must perform a given number of procedures or had to be cited by at least one physician in the past three years of **U.S. News & World Report** surveys.

These hospitals received a score that equally weighs reputation, mortality and certain care-related factors such as nursing.

Each year, the cardiac physicians at LVH perform 1,000 cases of open-heart surgery, nearly 5,000 cardiac catheterizations, 1,900 angioplasties and 1,250 procedures for electrical problems of the heart, making it the fourth largest heart program in Pennsylvania. The Regional Heart Center completed expansion of its services to Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg in Bethlehem in June 2002 when open-heart surgery was launched at that location.

Additionally, in April LVH became the first hospital in the region and one of the first in the country to treat patients using a newly FDA-approved drug-coated stent to prevent scar tissue re-growth in a coronary artery. The MI Alert program at LVH and LVH-Muhlenberg is the cutting edge for diagnosing and treating heart attacks quickly by meeting and beating the 90 minute "gold standard" for opening a blocked blood vessel with angioplasty upon a patient's arrival at the hospital.

CMS Rescinds Fee Schedule Adjustment

by Bonnie Miller, CMM, CCS-P, Lehigh Valley Physicians' Business Services

Good news! The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has announced that it will not require Medicare carriers to go forward with the automatic July mass adjustments and resulting collection of overpayments.

CMS had planned to require carriers to collect overpayments relating to certain claims for services provided in January and February of this year. The problem arose from the delay in the effective date of the fee schedule -- which was March 1, 2003, rather than January 1. Claims with dates of service in January or February were supposed to be paid at 2002 rates, but due to claims processing limitations, if

they were submitted after March 1, they were paid at the higher 2003 rates. CMS has been warning doctors about the adjustments for months.

To the relief of billing staff everywhere, the agency has had an eleventh-hour change of heart. "If an overpayment exists, you will not be receiving any 'Demand' letters related to an incorrect payment based on the delay of the 2003 MPFS. This also means that Medicare beneficiaries will not be receiving copies of those 'Demand' letters that would have potentially caused unnecessary confusion to them," CMS tells physicians.

To see the CMS notice on the mass adjustments, go to: <http://cms.hhs.gov/physicians/goodnews.pdf>.

CMS adds an important warning to its mass adjustment notice: "You should be aware that if you bring to the attention of the Medicare carrier that an incorrect payment for January or February 2003 was received, the carrier will still process such an adjustment." In other words, don't create any extra paperwork for yourself!

Lehigh Valley Hospitalist Services Begin at LVH-Muhlenberg

On July 14, Lehigh Valley Hospitalist Services (LVHS) began at LVH-Muhlenberg. Hospitalist care is a growing national trend in top hospitals around the country. LVH-Muhlenberg is the first hospital in the region to introduce this cutting edge medical practice on a 24/7 basis. LVHS is an inpatient practice only -- there is no office component to this practice.

To reach a member of Lehigh Valley Hospitalist Services, please page (610) 402-5100 3142. The administrative office of LVHS is located on the third floor of LVH-Muhlenberg next to the Case Manager's office. The phone number for the administrative office is (484) 884-9677.

Attention: Office Managers

On September 1, annual dues invoices will be distributed to members of the Medical Staff of Lehigh Valley Hospital. Timely remittance of dues is both requested and appreciated.

If you have any questions regarding Medical Staff dues, please contact Janet M. Seifert in Medical Staff Services at (610) 402-8590.

National Participating Physician Directory

The National Participating Physician Directory contains valuable information about Medicare participating physicians for the use of beneficiaries, their families, and their caregivers. In order to ensure that the directory includes the most up-to-date information, practicing physicians should check the accuracy of their listings and use the feedback tool on the CMS web site to notify the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) about any information that is incorrect, has changed, or to advise CMS if they are not listed in the directory.

Information Included in the Directory

The following information is available regarding Medicare participating physicians (those who have agreed to always accept assignment):

- Name and address (including a mapping feature)

- Medical specialty
- Business telephone number
- Medical school and year of graduation
- Board certification in a medical specialty
- Gender
- Hospital affiliation
- Foreign language
- Residency and internship program (coming soon)
- Sanctions against individual physicians (coming soon)
- Whether accepting new Medicare patients (coming soon)

How to Check Accuracy of the Information

The accuracy of the listing for the physician(s) in your practice can be checked by clicking on the "Participating Physician Directory" from the home page of www.medicare.gov. The feedback tool is available to correct any information that is incorrect, has changed, or to advise CMS if

they are not listed in the directory. The directory will be updated on a monthly basis. For additional information about the directory, click on "Physician Note" at the bottom of the page. You may also link to the directory from the CMS web site at www.cms.hhs.gov/physicians (under "Participation").

Note: Only participating physicians who have agreed to accept assignment on all Medicare claims and covered services are included in the directory. Assignment does not apply to Medicare managed care or private fee-for-service plans.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact Provider Relations at Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania at 1-866-502-9058.

Dental Health Video Available



A free video focusing on the Prevention of Early Childhood Tooth Decay, titled "Smile Baby" is now available to your practice. The video was filmed and produced locally, through collaboration with Lehigh Valley community members and representatives from organizations that serve

families, along with dental and pediatric clinicians. Each subtitled tape contains English and Spanish audio versions and is approximately 10 minutes long.

The project was a combined effort of MESH Community Initiatives in the Department of Community Health and Health Studies at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Parkland High School, and Lehigh Valley Hospital Dental Department.

If you would like a copy of the video for patient and family viewing, please call MESH Community Initiatives at (610) 402-3950. There is no charge for the video. It is being made available through the generosity and support of the Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust, the Lehigh Valley Hospital Dental Department, Dr. Jack Karabasz, Colgate, and Teen Works.

Tips from the Pennsylvania Medical Society

Following are a few helpful tips from the Pennsylvania Medical Society:

- **HIPAA Update: PA Law Doesn't Require a Written Authorization for Every Disclosure** - Some members have asked whether Pennsylvania law requires a written authorization for every disclosure of protected health information. While current state law does contain references to disclosure of personally identifiable facts, it does not state that consent has to be written and it doesn't require a separate consent for every disclosure. It is equally important for physicians to ensure that patient information is not withheld when another provider needs to treat the patient.
- **HIPAA Resources Available from State Society** - The Pennsylvania Medical Society continues to offer a variety of training resources. Information on these products, as well as the new authorization form and templates for all forms required by HIPAA, can be found on the HIPAA section of the PMS web site at: <http://www.pamedsoc.org/hipaa>. To request a manual or video, contact the Business Resource Center at 877-BRC-2425 or e-mail brc@pamedsoc.org.
- **Make Sure to Use Revised HIPAA Notice** - In March 2003, the Pennsylvania Medical Society corrected a typo in section II.C of the sample Notice of Privacy Practices. Physician practices using the Society's notice should make sure they are using the most recent version. If you are using the incorrect version, don't panic -- find out what you should do at www.pamedsoc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Practice_Advocacy&Template=/MembersOnly.cfm&ContentID=4258#hipaa (Members only. Requires login).
- **State Society to Offer Insurance Program to Members** - Effective October 1, 2003, Pennsylvania Society members will have the option to renew their insurance policies through USI Colburn, Inc. -- the Society's former endorsed insurance vendor -- or purchase new policies through the Pennsylvania Medical Society Insurance Agency. For information about this change, go to: www.pamedsoc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Practice_Advocacy&Template=/MembersOnly.cfm&ContentID=4258#colburn (Members only. Requires login).
- **New Smoking Cessation Program Available** - The Pennsylvania Free Quitline (1-877-724-1090) is a free, 24-hour, telephone counseling service that provides smoking cessation assistance to Pennsylvania tobacco users who are ready to quit. Physicians may request promotional support materials by calling the Quitline number above, or the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.

Not a member? If the physicians in your practice are not members of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, find out about membership at www.pamedsoc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Join_Us.

Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network . . . At a Glance



- The hospitals -- with **three locations** -- have a total of 750 acute beds with a combined medical staff of more than 1,100 -- more than 900 of them board certified -- representing over 50 specialties. LVHHN is the **area's largest employer** with more than 7,200 employees.



LVH-Muhlenberg Summer Festival

What's cooking at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg this summer? It's the Summer Festival, with plenty of your favorite foods and activities, plus a Health Fair where you can enjoy yourself while learning about your health!

The Summer Festival will be held from Wednesday, August 13, through Saturday, August 16. The Health Fair will be held from noon to 3 p.m., on Saturday, August 16, at the Banko Family Community Center.

Events and Entertainment

Wednesday, August 13

5 p.m. - Opening

7-10 p.m. - King Henry and the Showmen - Listen to the music audiences want to hear, including swing, big band, rock, Latin and love songs.

Thursday, August 14

7-10 p.m. - The Mudflaps - Enjoy the authentic vocal renditions of old-time

rock 'n roll with northeastern Pennsylvania's premiere show and dance band.

Friday, August 15

7-10 p.m. - Twitty Fever - This eight-member group is fun to watch, listen to and dance to as they sing some of the all-time hits of Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn.

Saturday, August 16

Noon-3 p.m. - Health Fair

1-3 p.m. - Tootsee the Clown and Friends

3-4 p.m. - Glenn Miller The Big One Man Band - A professional performer and entertainer for the past 25 years, Glenn Miller's repertoire consists of music from the '40s through the '90s.

7-10 p.m. - Crazy Heart - Kick back and enjoy the country sounds of Crazy Heart.

10 p.m. - Cash Raffle - First prize is \$1,000!

Special Attractions

- Crafts
- Arts

- Rides and Games
- Kiddy Land
- Bake Booth
- Festival Foods
- Handmade Items, Attic Treasures and Penny Candy
- Bingo
- MORA Club Book and Plant Sale
- Cash Raffle Drawing

Health Fair

Saturday, August 16

Noon-3 p.m. - Banko Family Community Center

- See a chef in action
- Have a seated chair message
- Meet the therapy dogs
- Get a better night's sleep
- Test your wrists for carpal tunnel syndrome
- Check your balance
- Breathe easier
- Check your heart disease risk

Patrons of the festival should enter LVH-Muhlenberg at the entrance off Westgate Drive and follow the signs for festival parking.

For more information, call 610-402-CARE.

Who's New

Kathy Fey, Office Manager

North Whitehall Family Practice
3560 Route 309
Orefield, PA 18069-2001
(610) 398-2600 ♦ Fax: (610) 398-0240

Pam Kametz, Office Manager

T.A. Gopal, MD
Allentown Medical Center
401 N. 17th Street, Suite 301
Allentown, PA 18104-5051
(610) 432-9003 ♦ Fax: (610) 432-7769

Terry O'Neil, Office Manager

Lehigh Neurology
1210 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Suite 1800
Allentown, PA 18103-6208
(610) 402-8420 ♦ Fax: (610) 402-1689

Karen Rusinko, Office Manager

Neurosurgical Associates of LVP
1210 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Suite 1100
Allentown, PA 18103-6229
(610) 402-6555 ♦ Fax: (610) 402-6550



Cedar Crest & I-78
P.O. Box 689
Allentown, PA 18105-1556

Phone: 610-402-8590
Fax: 610-402-8938
Email: janet.seifert@lvh.com

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Alexander D. Rae-Grant, MD

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Editorial Staff:

Janet M. Seifert

Coordinator, Communications & Special Events

Managing Editor

Brenda E. Lehr

Beth Martin

Bonnie Miller

Pat Skrovanek

From the Editor:

Please help us keep our records accurate. If your office manager has changed, please call Janet Seifert in Medical Staff Services at (610) 402-8590.

FOCUS is published quarterly for the office staffs of physicians on the Medical Staff of Lehigh Valley Hospital. Articles for the next issue should be submitted by September 19, 2003, to Janet M. Seifert, Medical Staff Services, Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78, P.O. Box 689, Allentown, PA 18105-1556 or emailed to janet.seifert@lvh.com. For more information, please call Janet at (610) 402-8590.